



Diocletian's Problem-Reaction-Solution

A further example of how elites throughout history commit acts of terrorism as a pretext to create enemies and corral populations behind a tyrannical agenda

By Paul Joseph Watson



The Roman Emperor Diocletian came to power in 284 AD. He was an army general with a repressive disdain of his 'subjects.' Diocletian ran his government as a general runs an army, giving orders and expecting them to be carried out. He believed that only severe restrictions on personal freedoms could bring order to the empire. By 301 AD, after the conclusion of conflicts with the Germans and the Sassanids, Diocletian needed a new enemy to justify his tyrannical form of government. At the same time, the Emperor declared the economy to be in crisis and implemented astronomical taxation increases. Amongst the people there surfaced a gradual unrest towards Diocletian's

economic policy. The Emperor needed a new enemy to regain the support of his pseudo-slaves. After the earlier successful persecution of the Manichaeans, Diocletian slowly turned his head in the direction of the Christians, and his thumb was pointing down. This, despite the fact that he had largely ignored them for the past 15 years. Across the empire, Christians made up around ten percent of the population -- their number having doubled in about fifty years. Two kings had been converted: the king of Osroene in north eastern Mesopotamia and the king of Armenia. Christians were serving in Rome's armies, and they were working as civil servants in local government or in lowly positions on the imperial staff. Diocletian could see his scapegoat.

In the autumn of 302 AD Diocletian visited Antioch in Syria for an official engagement. Prior to this of course, there had to take place the customary Pagan sacrifice. But you see this time there was a problem. As the bloodletting

ritual began, there came the vocal denouncements of the on looking Christians. Many made cross signs to ward off the evil influence of the sacrifice. Prominent amongst these brave dissenters was a Christian named Romanus. Diocletian fumed. " . . . In the first, while Diocletian was sacrificing in public, the chief interpreter of the victims' organs reported that he could not read the future in them because of the hostile influence of Christians standing around. Diocletian burst into a rage, insisting that all in his court should offer sacrifice, and sent out orders to his army to follow suit." (Ramsey MacMullen, Constantine, p.24).



Brave Christians vehemently decried blood-curdling Pagan sacrifices made in the name of the god of Jupiter, to whom Diocletian proclaimed himself the earthly representative of Rome.

This provided Diocletian with the perfect opportunity to launch his persecution and Romanus had his tongue cut off and languished in agony for over a year after in jail. Meanwhile, the Emperor demanded the Christians sacrifice to the gods of the state or face execution. Many refused and further retreated underground in the hope of avoiding the manic dictates of this mad general.

Diocletian's vice-emperor, Galerius, didn't have a hard time in persuading him that if a Palace were just to burn down, Diocletian could really accelerate his crusade against the Christians. Just by coincidence, twice within sixteen days toward the end of February, Diocletian's palace in Nicomedia burned. The Christians were immediately blamed.



The Emperor needed a crisis to put the purge of the Christians into overdrive. This was accomplished when he had his guards set fire to his own palace in Nicomedia on two different occasions at the end of February, 303 AD. A crushing set of edicts then followed as the Christians were blamed for the blaze.

A monumental crackdown then occurred as Diocletian issued four edicts against the Christians. Christian assemblies were forbidden. Bibles were confiscated and burned, and churches were destroyed. Christians were torn limb from limb in the arena, the animals goaded on by a mindless population who had accepted at face value the guilt of the Christians. Others were imprisoned and offered release if they appeased the Emperor's sick Pagan blood lust and made one sacrifice. The majority refused, yet Diocletian wanted disunity within the Christian ranks and so had some marked down as having made a sacrifice, even though they didn't.



Christians were torn limb from limb in the arena. The watching audience found this acceptable now that the empire had declared them to be the equivalent of 21st century 'terrorists.'

The purges slowly and intermittently dragged on into the year 305, but by now the Christians had become too numerous across the empire to be wiped out. Despot Diocletian retired through illness in 305 AD. The vice-emperor in the east, Galerius, began a joint rule of the empire with the vice-emperor in Rome and the west: Constantius. Constantius died in battle in 306 AD and his son, Constantine, succeeded him. The thousands of Christians butchered by Diocletian in the purge had not died in vain. Constantine was to change the world by becoming the first Christian emperor.

IN CONCLUSION: ELITES CREATE ENEMIES IN ORDER TO RE-ORDER SOCIETY IN THEIR OWN TYRANNICAL IMAGE. THEY DO SO BY COMMITTING ACTS OF TERRORISM AGAINST THEIR OWN BUILDINGS AND BEAURACRACIES, THEN CHOOSING THE SCAPEGOAT. THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY IS THAT THESE 'ENEMIES' ARE MORE BELIEVABLE BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN MANUFACTURED AND EMPOWERED BY THE ELITE. I WISH TO DRAW NO COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE 4TH CENTURY CHRISTIANS AND AL-QAEDA, BUT THEY WERE BOTH USED FOR THE SAME PURPOSE: TO BRING ORDER OUT OF CHAOS.

AND REMEMBER...

"Those who do not learn from history
are condemned to repeat it."

— George Santayana.



